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Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Ms. Anzhela **Korneliouk** (Belarus)

I. Introduction

1. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 11 September 2000, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled "Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee considered the item at its 24th, 25th, 31st and 37th meetings, on 16, 17, 23 and 26 October 2000. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/55/SR.24, 25, 31 and 37).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations (A/55/202);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade (A/55/268).

4. At the 24th meeting, on 16 October, an introductory statement was made by the Director of the New York Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (see A/C.3/55/SR.24).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.3/55/L.19

5. At the 31st meeting, on 23 October, the representative of Denmark, on behalf of Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia,

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Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Venezuela, introduced a draft resolution entitled "International Decade of the World's Indigenous People" (A/C.3/55/L.19). Subsequently, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Paraguay and the Russian Federation joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At its 37th meeting, on 26 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/55/L.19 without a vote (see para. 8).

7. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of Guatemala (see A/C.3/55/SR.37).

III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

8. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 54/150 of 17 December 1999 and previous resolutions on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,

Recalling also that the goal of the Decade is to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health and that the theme of the Decade is "Indigenous people: partnership in action",

Recognizing the importance of consultation and cooperation with indigenous people in planning and implementing the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,[1] the need for adequate financial support from the international community, including support from within the United Nations system, and the need for adequate coordination and communication channels,

Urging all parties to continue to intensify their efforts to achieve the goals of the Decade,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People;[2]

2. *Affirms its conviction* of the value and diversity of the cultures and forms of social organization of indigenous people and its conviction that the development

[1] Resolution 50/157, annex.

[2] A/55/268.

of indigenous people within their countries will contribute to the socio-economic, cultural and environmental advancement of all the countries of the world;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of strengthening the human and institutional capacity of indigenous people to develop their own solutions to their problems;

4. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as coordinator for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People:

(a) To continue to promote the objectives of the Decade, taking into account, in the fulfilment of her functions, the special concerns of the indigenous people;

(b) To give due regard to the dissemination, from within existing resources and voluntary contributions, of information on the situation, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous people and, in that context, to consider the possibility of organizing projects, special events, exhibitions and other activities addressed to the public, in particular to young people;

(c) To submit, through the Secretary-General, an annual report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade;

5. *Reaffirms* the adoption of a declaration on the rights of indigenous people as a major objective of the Decade, and underlines the importance of effective participation by indigenous representatives in the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with developing a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people, established pursuant to Commission resolution 1995/32 of 3 March 1995;[3]

6. *Welcomes* the decision of the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2000/22 of 28 July 2000, to establish a Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as a subsidiary organ of the Council, thereby fulfilling an important objective of the Decade, and encourages all parties concerned to engage in the necessary preparations for the establishment of the Forum;

7. *Encourages* Governments to support the Decade by:

(a) Preparing relevant programmes, plans and reports in relation to the Decade, in consultation with indigenous people;

(b) Seeking means, in consultation with indigenous people, of giving indigenous people greater responsibility for their own affairs and an effective voice in decisions on matters that affect them;

(c) Establishing national committees or other mechanisms involving indigenous people to ensure that the objectives and activities of the Decade are planned and implemented on the basis of full partnership with indigenous people;

(d) Contributing to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Decade for the World's Indigenous People;

(e) Contributing, together with other donors, to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations in order to assist indigenous representatives in participating in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and the open-

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/1995/23 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. A.

ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people;

(f) Considering contributing, as appropriate, to the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, in support of the goals of the Decade;

(g) Identifying resources for activities designed to implement the goals of the Decade, in cooperation with indigenous people and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

8. *Invites* United Nations financial and developmental institutions, operational programmes and the specialized agencies and secretariats, as well as other regional and international organizations, in accordance with the existing procedures of their governing bodies:

(a) To give increased priority and resources to improving the conditions of indigenous people, with particular emphasis on the needs of those people in developing countries, including through the preparation of specific programmes of action for the implementation of the goals of the Decade, within their areas of competence;

(b) To launch special projects, through appropriate channels and in cooperation with indigenous people, to strengthen their community-level initiatives and to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise among indigenous people and other relevant experts;

(c) To designate focal points for the coordination of activities related to the Decade with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

and commends those institutions, programmes, agencies and regional and international organizations that have already done so;

9. *Recommends* that the Secretary-General ensure coordinated follow-up to the recommendations concerning indigenous people of relevant United Nations conferences, namely, the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 3 to 14 June 1992, the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, the Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995, the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held at Istanbul, Turkey, from 3 to 14 June 1996, and the World Food Summit, held at Rome from 13 to 17 November 1996, and other relevant international conferences;

10. *Emphasizes* the importance of the participation of indigenous people in United Nations world conferences and their national, regional and other preparatory processes, in particular the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, to be held in South Africa in 2001, and encourages Member States to facilitate the participation of their indigenous people, inter alia, by considering including representatives of indigenous people in their delegations;

11. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit, through the Secretary-General, a report on the implementation of the programme of activities of the Decade to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session;

12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-sixth session the item entitled "Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People".